

REMARKS

Pending Claims

Claims 22, 24, and 27 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 22-28 are currently pending.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and receipt of the priority document.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 5, 2001.

Specification

The specification has been amended to correct typographical or other inadvertent errors. No new matter has been added by the amendments to the specification.

Drawings

The Office Action did not indicate whether the drawings had been approved. Applicants, however, noted corrections which need to be made in Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings. Being filed concurrently herewith are replacement sheets in which the spelling of "Answer" has been corrected in Figs. 1 and 2. With approval of these corrections, it is requested that the drawings be approved.

Claim Rejections

Claims 22-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Mikurak, U.S. Patent 6,671,818. For the reasons set forth hereafter, it is submitted that the claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the Mikurak '818 patent.

Patentability of the Claims

Independent claims 22, 24, and 27 have been amended so that information communication between the answer system for a user and the answer system for a service furnisher (furnishing

and receiving information to or from one of the answer systems from or to the other) is further defined. .

In the present invention as set forth in the amended claims, an answer system for technical support is composed of the answer system for a user and the answer system for a service furnisher. In order to raise the information security of the answer system for a service finisher, the answer system for technical support is constructed such that the inquiry information from a user and registered in the answer system for a user is taken periodically at fixed intervals in the answer system for a service furnisher from the answer system for a user. Thus, the answer system for technical support is not constructed so that at the same time as an inquiry is received at the answer system for a user, the inquiry is registered in the answer system for a service furnisher. Therefore, the answer system for a service furnisher according to the present invention is provided with a processing program for periodically taking in the inquiry information.

With the above-mentioned construction or process, it is possible to make it difficult for a third person (outsider) to effect unauthorized access to the answer system for a service

furnisher. Further, the system is constructed so that one system is not commonly owned by both the user and the service furnisher, but the user uses the answer system for a user and the service furnisher uses the answer system for a service furnisher, separately. With this arrangement, it is possible to take in inquiry information from a user in the answer system for a service furnisher under the condition that inquiry information from the user is left in the answer system for a user, and both the answer systems can effect individually information registered in the database of the answer system for a user can be backed up by the answer system for a service furnisher.

The Mikurak '818 patent is directed to a different system which does not disclose the above-mentioned information communication between the answer system for a user and the answer system for a service furnisher, i.e., furnishing and receiving information to or from one of the answer systems from or to the other. Accordingly, a construction is provided whereby inquiry information from a user and registered in the answer system for a user is taken periodically at fixed intervals in the answer system for a service furnisher from

the answer system for a user. Mikurak does no such construction.

Moreover, Mikurak does not disclose a system that receives inquiry information relating to power plant techniques from a user of the power plant and sends an answer to the inquiry information to the user. The present invention does not relate to a general inquiry and an answer thereto, but relates to an inquiry relating to power plant techniques and an answer thereto, so that information in answer to the inquiry has great importance and value.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene W. Stockman".

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